

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 29, 2009

**Statement from the Press Secretary on the Extension of the
Generalized System of Preferences Program and the Andean Trade Preferences Act**

Yesterday, the President signed legislation extending for a year the duty-free treatment available to 131 developing countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program. This legislation also extends for a year the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA) program, which currently applies to imports from Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. We welcome this legislation as a renewed statement of America's commitment to work with developing countries to increase their participation in the global trading system. GSP increases trade, creates good jobs for our economy, and further helps to expand choices and lower costs for U.S. consumers and industry. In part due to the market opening under the GSP program, the United States is one of the world's most open economies to products of developing countries and this helps alleviate poverty globally.

Extension of the ATPA program will also encourage trade and help countries in the Andean region combat the scourge of narcotics production and trafficking. The legislation did not restore benefits to Bolivia. We believe that the United States and Bolivia need to work closely together to improve cooperation with respect to our common objective of combating the production of and trafficking in illicit narcotics. The President has directed the Administration to work with the government of Bolivia to improve cooperation, and if cooperation improves, to work with Congress to restore benefits to Bolivia under the ATPA program.